

Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 PRS-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05
NSCE-00 /024 R

DRAFTED BY PA:JCHAMBERLAIN:JC
APPROVED BY PA/M:CWFREEMAN
S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
PA, S/S, S/PRS

-----101840Z 119496 /53
O 101802Z MAY 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
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UNCLAS STATE 106122 TOSEC 040142

FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT FLORA LEWIS FRONT PAGE BYLINER
NEW YORK TIMES TUESDAY MAY 10 HEADED "CARTER, AT MEETING
WITH SYRIAN, CALLS FOR PALESTINIAN 'HOMELAND'."

2. GENEVA--PRESIDENT CARTER MET HERE TODAY WITH PRESIDENT
HAFEZ AL-ASSAD OF SYRIA TO DISCUSS THE MIDDLE EAST CON-
FLICT, AND SAID AT A MEETING WITH REPORTERS THAT "THERE
MUST BE A RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINE PROBLEM AND A HOME-
LAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS."

3. THIS REFERENCE TO A PALESTINIAN ,HOMELAND" WAS A
STRONGER AND MORE OFFICIAL UNITED STATES COMMITMENT THAN
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EVER TO SOME KIND OF STATE FOR THE PALESTINIANS.

4. THOUGH HE HAD EARLIER REFERRED TO A "PALESTINIAN HOME-
LAND," AT A TOWN MEETING AT CLINTON, MASS., THE STATEMENT
WAS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE OF A SOVIET REPORT THAT THE
PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION'S LEADER, YASIR ARAFAT,
WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST IF ISRAEL

WOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY ENDORSE A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND.

5. ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INDICATION THAT THE P.L.O. HAD MOVED TO THIS POSITION, ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, MR. CARTER'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER, REPLIED, "NOT AT THIS STAGE."

6. BUT AMERICAN OFFICIALS, SPEAKING IN PRIVATE, DID NOT DENY A REPORT THAT THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, ANATOLY F. DOBRYNIN, INFORMED SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE LAST WEEK ABOUT THE NEW STAND OF MR. ARAFAT. RATHER, THEY CHOSE TO REITERATE THAT THEY COULD NOT DISCUSS "ELEMENTS OF THE PACKAGE UNTIL WE HAVE THE WHOLE PACKAGE."

7. BEFORE THE CARTER-ASSAD SESSION, BOTH SIDES WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO EXPRESS GREAT OPTIMISM THAT A SERIOUS MOVE TOWARD PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST COULD BE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR.

8. MR. BRZEZINSKI SAID AT HIS BRIEFING THAT THE TWO LEADERS HAD DISCUSSED IN DETAIL WHAT WASHINGTON CONSIDERED THE THREE MAIN ISSUES: "THE NATURE AND MEANING OF PEACE," "BOUNDARIES AND THEIR RELATION TO SECURITY," AND "THE PALESTINIANS, BOTH IN TERMS OF THEIR REPRESENTATION AT FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS AND IN THE LONGER TERM ASPECT OF A SETTLEMENT."

9. HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF DEMILITARIZED ZONES OR UNCLASSIFIED

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"OTHER SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS" TO GUARANTEE BORDERS HAD BEEN TAKEN UP IN DETAIL, AND THAT MR. ASSAD HAD AGREED THAT RESUMPTION OF A MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE IN GENEVA "SHOULD BE WELL PREPARED," APPARENTLY AN ENDORSEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES APPROACH AND TIMETABLE FOR A SETTLEMENT.

10. THE TALKS, WHICH LASTED THREE HOURS AND 25 MINUTES, WERE DESCRIBED BY MR. BRZEZINSKI AS "EXTREMELY VALUABLE, VERY INFORMATIVE, VERY FRIENDLY."

11. HE SAID THAT MR. CARTER HAD TOLD THE SYRIAN LEADER THAT AFTER THE CURRENT SERIES OF SEPARATE UNITED STATES MEETINGS WITH MIDDLE EAST LEADERS "WE WILL KNOW BETTER HOW TO PROCEED."

12. ONLY AFTER THESE MEETINGS, AND AFTER THE MIDDLE EAST TOUR PLANNED BY SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE, WOULD THERE BE A DECISION ON CALLING A GENEVA MEETING, POSSIBLY LATE THIS YEAR.

13. MR. VANCE IS TO SEE FOREIGN MINISTER YIGAL ALLON OF ISRAEL IN LONDON ON WEDNESDAY, AND LATER THIS MONTH PRINCE FAHD OF SAUDI ARABIA WILL VISIT WASHINGTON. AFTER ISRAELI ELECTIONS, THE NEW PRIME MINISTER IS EXPECTED TO GO TO WASHINGTON TOO.

14. THERE WAS SOME SPECULATION THAT IF THE SOVIET REPORT ON THE PLO COULD BE CONFIRMED, THE UNITED STATES MIGHT BE PREPARED TO MAKE ITS FIRST OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH MR. ARAFAT WHEN MR. VANCE TOURS THE MIDDLE EAST.

15. THE SUBTLE DIPLOMATIC GESTURES WERE EVIDENTLY BEING PLANNED WITH MUCH DELIBERATION. MR. CARTER WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO MAKE THE TRIP TO GENEVA FROM THE LONDON SUMMIT MEETING AND WAS EFFUSIVE IN HIS PRAISE OF MR. ASSAD, CALLING HIM "THE GREAT PRESIDENT OF SYRIA" IN HIS STATEMENT
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HERE.

16. ON THE OTHER HAND, MR. CARTER IS NOT STAYING IN LONDON TO SEE MR. ALLON, WHO WILL ARRIVE AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME THE PRESIDENT DEPARTS FOR WASHINGTON.

17. AFTER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KURT FURGLER OF SWITZERLAND IN HIS SUITE AT THE INTER-CONTINENTAL HOTEL HERE, MR. CARTER MADE HIS FIRST CONTACT WITH MR. ASSAD IN THE SYRIAN LEADER'S SUITE. THEN BOTH OF THEM WENT DOWNSTAIRS TO SEE THE REPORTERS.

18. MR. CARTER BEGAN BY SAYING THAT HE LOOKED TO MR. ASSAD "FOR GUIDANCE AND ADVICE AND FOR SUPPORT AS ALL OF US SEARCH FOR PROGRESS" TOWARD A PEACE SETTLEMENT.

19. "THIS IS A YEAR," THE PRESIDENT SAID, "WHEN WE ARE BLESSED WITH STRONG AND MODERATE LEADERS IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN REGION. I BELIEVE THAT IT IS A YEAR OF HOPE FOR SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS. THE GOOD WILL OF PRESIDENT ASSAD HAS ALREADY BEEN DEMONSTRATED."

20. THEN MR. CARTER REPEATED THE KEY ELEMENTS OF HIS POLICY.

21. "THERE MUST BE FAIRNESS, THERE MUST BE SOME FLEXIBILITY, THERE MUST BE A FORGETTING ABOUT PAST DIFFERENCES AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS, THERE MUST BE DETERMINATION, THERE MUST BE A RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINE PROBLEM AND A HOME- LAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS, THERE MUST BE SOME RESOLUTION OF BORDER DISPUTES, AND THERE ALSO MUST BE AN ASSURANCE OF

PERMANENT AND REAL PEACE WITH GUARANTEES FOR THE FUTURE
SECURITY OF THESE COUNTRIES, WHICH ALL CAN TRUST."

22. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS PREPARED TO
ACT AS AN "INTERMEDIARY" BUT THAT AGREEMENTS MUST BE MADE
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BY THE COUNTRIES IN THE AREA.

23. PRESIDENT ASSAD IN HIS STATEMENT EXPRESSED WARM
REGARD FOR MR. CARTER, SAYING THAT HIS "EXPRESSIONS HAVE
CREATED AN ATMOSPHERE OF FAITH AND AN ENCOURAGING ATMOS-
PHERE OF OPTIMISM."

24. "THERE IS THE WILL TO LOOK FOR A SOLUTION," HE SAID,
AVOIDING REPETITION OF SOME OF THE CUSTOMARY ARAB WARN-
INGS AND DEMANDS, ALTHOUGH HE SAID THAT ISRAELI "OCCUPA-
TION OF TERRITORIES SEIZED BY FORCE IN 1967 AND THE
"HOMELESSNESS" OF THE ARAB PEOPLE OF PALESTINE INEVITABLY
MEANS THE PROLONGATION OF A GRAVE SITUATION THAT THREATENS
TO RENEW THE WARS AND TRAGEDIES FROM WHICH OUR REGION HAS
SUFFERED FOR 30 YEARS."

25. AFTER THE FORMAL TALKS, PRESIDENT CARTER GAVE A
DINNER PARTY FOR THE SYRIAN DELEGATION IN THE HOTEL NIGHT
CLUB, WHICH WAS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC FOR THE OCCASION.
THEY EXCHANGED CORDIAL TOASTS, WITH MR. ASSAD REPEATEDLY
EXPRESSING HIS "APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT CARTER'S
SINCERITY."

26. MR. CARTER THEN LEFT FOR THE RETURN FLIGHT TO LONDON,
WHERE THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION'S SPRING
MEETING OPENS TOMORROW.

27. ON THE WAY TO GENEVA, A HIGH OFFICIAL ABOARD AIR
FORCE ONE SAID THAT THERE WAS OPTIMISM "THAT REALLY
SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN BEFORE THE END OF THIS
YEAR, EVEN IF NOT IN A FORMAL GENEVA SETTING." HE OUT-
LINED MORE SPECIFICALLY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S
APPROACH THAN MR. BRZEZINSKI DID IN THE OPEN GENEVA
BRIEFING. (END TEXT.) CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, TEXT, PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, REFUGEES, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE106122
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JCHAMBERLAIN:JC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770164-1007
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770573/aaaac1hm.tel
Line Count: 214
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fb014597-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2579764
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS MATERIAL
TAGS: SOPN, OVIP, US, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (CARTER, JIMMY), (AL-ASSAD, HAFEZ)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fb014597-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009